

614  
[302] earlier paragraphs (pp. 184-189); these symbols evidently represent an exclusively maternal organization into clans consecrated to sole tutelarities. The tutelarities, or totema, together with the clan names and all personal designations connected with the totema, are highly esoteric, and were not ascertained save in the few cases mentioned above.<sup>1</sup>

593 It should be observed that the identification of kindred by the alien observer is difficult and somewhat uncertain, since the relationships recognized in Seri socialry are not equivalent to those customary among Caucasians. It was found especially difficult to identify the husband  
[582] of the jacal, partly because he is commonly incongruously younger (and hence relatively smaller) than the mistress, and partly because of the undignified position of outer guard into which he is forced by the tribal etiquette. Moreover, his connection with the house is veiled by the absence of authority over both children and domestic affairs, though he exercises such authority freely (within the customary limits) in the jacales of his female relatives. There is, indeed, some question as to the clear recognition of paternity; certainly the females have no term for "my father", i. e., the term is the same as that for "my mother", *em*, though the males distinguish the maternal ancestor by a suffixed syllable (*em* = "my father"; *em-ta* or *i-tah* = "my mother"), which seems to be a magnificative or an intensificative element. It is noteworthy that the kinship terminology is strikingly meager; also that while the records suggest various significant points, the material is hardly rich enough to warrant complete synthesis of the consanguineal system.

421 While the burden of the more permanent property pertains to the women, there is a decided differentiation of labor with a concomitant vesting of certain property in the warriors—the distinctively masculine chattels comprising arrows, quivers, bows, turtle-harpoons, etc. There are indications that the balsas, too, are regarded as masculine property. The impermanent possessions—water, food, etc.—seem to be the common property of men, women, and children, except in so far as the right is regulated by regimentation; for the privileges of eating and drinking are enjoyed in the order of seniority. In the reckoning of seniority, the chief (who is commonly such in virtue of his position as nominal elder brother of a prolific dame) ranks first, and is followed by other warriors in an order affected in an undetermined way by conjugal relations as well as by their prowess or sagacity (the equivalents of age in primitive philosophy) down to an undetermined point—apparently fixed by puberty; then comes the clanmother, followed by her daughters in the order of nominal age, which is affected by the status of spouses and the number of living offspring; finally come the children, practically in the order of their strength (which also is deemed an equivalent of age), though the girls—especially those

[121] <sup>1</sup>The chief object of the 1886 expedition was to pursue the inquiries concerning social organization, totema, etc.; but, as mentioned elsewhere, this object was defeated by the troublesome history of the tribe during the earlier part of 1886, and the consequent revival and intensification of their animosity toward aliens.

[McGEE]

## DISTRIBUTION OF RIGHTS

273\*

approaching nubility—receive some advantage through the con-<sup>554</sup>  
 vivance of the matrons. To a considerable extent in the matter <sup>602</sup>  
 of sustentation, and to a dominant degree in the matter of appar-<sup>554</sup>  
 eling, the distribution of values is affected by a highly signifi-<sup>577</sup>  
 cant (though by no means peculiar) humanitarian notion of inher-  
 ent individual rights—i. e., every member of the family or clan is  
 entitled to necessary food and raiment, and it is the duty of  
 every other person to see that the need is supplied. The stress of  
 this duty is graded partly by proximity (so that, other things equal, it  
 begins with the nearest person), but chiefly by standing and responsi-  
 bility in the group (which again are reckoned as equivalents of age,  
 whereby it becomes the business of the first at the feast to see that  
 enough is left to supply all below him; and this duty passes down the  
 line in such wise as to protect the interests of the helpless infant, and  
 even of the tribal gool-for-mought or hanger-on, who may gather crumbs  
 and lick bones within limits fixed by the tribal consensus. Beyond these  
 limits lies outlawry; and this status arises and passes into the tribal <sup>626</sup>  
 recognition in various ways: Kolusio was outlawed for consorting  
 with aliens, and Mashem narrowly missed the same fate at several stages  
 of his career; the would-be groom who fails in their moral tests are  
 ostracized and at least semioutlawed, and range about like rogue ele-  
 phants, approved targets for any arrow, until they perish through the  
 multiplied risks of solitude, or until some brilliant opportunity for display  
 of prowess or generosity brings reinstatement; deformed offspring are  
 classed as outside the human pale, even when the deformity is defined <sup>[732]</sup>  
 rather by occult associations than by physical features; abnormal and  
 persistent indolence, too serious for scorn and ostracism to cure, may  
 also outpass the tribal toleration; and, as indicated by Mashem's guarded  
 expressions and slight additional data, disease, mental aberration, and  
 decrepitude are allied with indolence and deemed sufficient reason for  
 excluding the persistently helpless from the tribal solidarity, and hence  
 from recognized humanity—and the fate of the outlaw, even if nothing  
 more severe than abandonment in the desert, is usually sure and swift.  
 The entire customs of outlawry among the Seri are singularly like those  
 of gregarious animals, including especially kine and swine in domesti-  
 cation. Now, studied equity in the distribution of necessities might <sup>185</sup>  
 seem to be allied to thrift; but it is noteworthy that this is not so among  
 the Seri, who take thought for one another but not for the morrow,  
 who seem to have no conception of storage (save an incipient one in  
 connection with water and the repulsive notion underlying the "second  
 harvest"), and who habitually gorge everything in sight until their  
 stomachs and gullets are packed—and then waste the fragments.

The division of labor which affects proprietary interests is undoubt- <sup>462</sup>  
 edly affected in turn by the militant habit of the tribe and by the fre-  
 quent decimation of the warriors. In general, the adult males limit their  
 work to fighting and fishing, with occasional excursions into the hunt